REMARKS

Responsive to the lack of unity determination imposed in the Official Action of October 26, 2007, applicants hereby provisionally elect Group I, claims 12-17 and 20-29, with traverse. As to the election of species requirement, applicants hereby provisionally elect hyaluronic acid with divinylsulfone as a cross-linking agent, with traverse. Applicants believe that all of the claims read on the elected species.

The grounds for traverse are for the reasons that follow:

The invention relates to a complex matrix based on biocompatible polymers of natural origin, which may be chosen among:

- hyaluronic acid, chondroitine sulfate, keratane, keratane sulfate, heparin, heparin sulfate, cellulose and its derivatives, xanthanes, alginates, proteins, and nucleic acid (claim 13) and

- polymers not naturally present in the human body cross linked with at least one polymer naturally present in the human body (claim 14).

The biopolymer is then cross-linked with a bi- or polyfunctional cross-linking agent selected from epoxides, epihalohydrines and divinylsulfone (claim 12) and grafted with side chains having a molecular weight less than 50,000 Da selected from polymers of natural origin of small size, non-

polymeric chains not naturally present in the human body, and non-polymeric chains having antioxidant properties or properties for inhibiting the degradation of the matrix (once it is injected in a human body) (claim 12).

In that the claimed invention is directed to a matrix and not to the selection of a single polymer as required by the Official Action, applicants respectfully submit that the manner in which the lack of unity determination has been imposed does not accurately reflect the claimed invention.

Thus, applicants submit that the requirement is improper. Indeed, the biocompatible polymers constitute a class of compounds currently used in cosmetic and aesthetic purposes (see, for instance, PCT/SE87/00272, page 3, line 30 to page 4, line 4) capable of being cross-linked with bi- or polyfunctional cross-linking agents selected from epoxides, epihalohydrines and divinylsulfone.

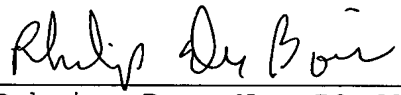
These biocompatible polymers are all susceptible to degradation due to active compounds once they are injected into a subject. The special technical feature of the invention is believed to be that the grafting of these various chains having a molecular weight less than 50,000 Da protects against various chemical and enzymatic attacks against the biocompatible polymer matrix, particularly with a quantity of grafting (e.g., from 10 to 40% as recited in claim 12).

Thus, in view of the above, applicants respectfully request a search and examination for all the claims in their full scope.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

YOUNG & THOMPSON



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